

*Lincoln*

*Trish 464*

# AN ADDRESS:

DELIVERED

ON REQUEST OF THE CONGREGATION,

BY

P. J. JOACHIMSEN, Esq.

AT THE PLACE OF WORSHIP OF THE HEBREW ASSOCIATION,  
TEMIMI DERECH, AT NEW ORLEANS,

On Saturday, April 29th, 1865.

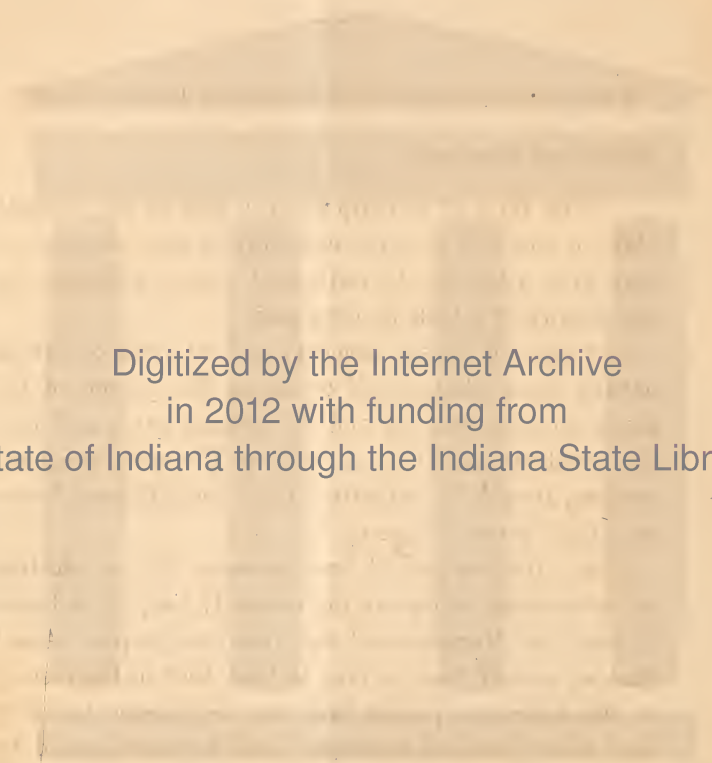


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# ADDRESS.

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Members of the Congregation Temimi Derech, Brethren in Faith :

**Ladies and Gentlemen :**

Our form of worship permits that on the Sabbath Day, in addition to our stated prayers and services, we may give attention to important events affecting the community of which we form part.

Our sages of blessed memory, well informed of human nature, knew that on all occasions the prayers of the pious do moderate joy and do assuage grief, and that the greatest rejoicings, as well as the most poignant sorrows, should be submitted to in thankfulness before our God's throne of mercy.

Alas ! that we should have occasion for an addition to our services to deplore the untimely loss, by violence, of the Chief Magistrate of the American people. Alas ! that we should have to pray to God that in the history of the American people this may be forever the only time when national mourning shall be accompanied by national humiliation and national shame. Death is the inevitable termination of life, and cannot be avoided, but to the survivors the manner of death becomes either a source of mournful satisfaction or acute regret. Unhappily that in the present instance every bosom heaves with natural indignation that ABRAHAM LINCOLN, the Chief Citizen of the Republic, endeavoring to maintain the peace of the land, implicitly trusting to the guarantees of life afforded by the very laws which it was his

sworn duty to execute, and in the peace of God then there being, should have fallen a victim to the most atrocious crime known to the civilized world.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was a type, a representative of the American people ; a kind husband, an indulgent father ; one of the masses, he ascended the ladder of laudable ambition, which, under our benign system of government, is open alike to all, solely by force of his own native intelligence, industry, and, above all, his purity of character. He was chosen a Legislator, a Senator, and, finally, the Chief Magistrate of the Republic. Unaided by worldly fortune or powerful friends, he attained to the fame of the most eminent patriots and statesmen—aye, even of WASHINGTON, the Father of his Country. You can point him out to your children as one of the men worthy of emulation, as a pattern and as an example. He was favored of God according to the Talmudic doctrine : “*Kol Sheruach Habrijoth nocho heimenu, Ruach Hamokom nocho heimenu*”—that he who enjoys the good will of men, upon him rests the good will of God. And we, as Jews, had a distinct ground to love, respect and esteem him. I know that he, in his high position, appreciated those of our creed who had come forward to sustain him. His mind was not subject to the vulgar clamor against Jews, and when, undoubtedly without due reflection and in a moment of excitement produced by malevolent reports, an order was made to banish Jews as a class from a particular Department, and their immediate and indiscriminate departure was being carried out, our deceased President at once revoked an unauthorized command so harsh and as condemnable in civilized history, as the sad fate of him whose loss we are now deploring.

The life of ABRAHAM LINCOLN is, however, so com-



pletely identified with history, his individuality has become so merged with the public life, that I cannot well discharge my duty without bringing a few years of our national annals briefly before you.

There are as yet many persons who do not fully understand this history.

Under a political system of self-government, of moderation and improvement, which even a Fenelon could not have helped to admire, the United States, and the States composing the Union, advanced to a degree of national splendor, hardly equaled by any ancient Republic or Empire.

The just and equal operation of our laws not only develops the remarkable intellectual and industrial minds of American born, but attracts towards us the man of liberal education, the intelligent mechanic, the honest and hardy laborer from abroad. Here *all* found protection to the person; industry untrammelled by odious taxes; free thought, free speech, and, above all, complete civil and religious liberty. Teeming with employment was the land, for there is not an earthly blessing but what God has bestowed upon this country. It produces within itself all the riches of the animal, vegetable and mineral domains which are found dispersed among other continents. Internal commerce is carried on upon natural water courses thousands of miles in uninterrupted length, and upon inland seas of unequaled extent, not vexed by the arbitrary exactions of rival sovereigns commanding the neighboring shores. The sails of our commercial navy whitened every ocean. Whilst abroad the American citizen could proudly rely that the respect conceded to the peaceful American flag was his sole and most complete protection, so at home, subject only to obedience to law, every man "could sit

down under the shade of his own vine and fig tree and there was none to make him afraid."

Most, if not all of us, my hearers, were attracted hither to forget the land of our nativity and the homes of our forefathers, to participate gratefully in this national prosperity and happiness. The United States attained this eminence by strict adherence to the laws framed by the people and executed by the men, the choice of the people. There was no apprehension that those to whom the people had entrusted their welfare, would be opposed or obstructed in their proper functions. It was the great boast of Americans that they were law-abiding citizens. Armed political revulsion was as unthought of, and as unprovided for, as the crime of paricide was in ancient Sparta.

In the midst of this prosperity there were men who had become satiated by success, and whose ambitious cravings could not endure the limits set to their power by the Constitution and the laws, in the making of which they themselves had shared. Systematic efforts were made to impress the public mind with the untrue proposition that the unlimited extent of domestic slavery was necessary to the ultimate happiness of the American people. Whilst on the one side Franklin, and philanthropists since his day, had labored to establish in our land the maxim, "*Orbe Respublicae qui sunt, cives Respublicae effecti sunt,*" that all who live within the Republic are in fact citizens of the Republic, on the other hand those who are now false to their oaths and to their allegiance, endeavored to bring us back to the darkness of the sixteenth century, when it was claimed that the dominant white race, by divine prerogative, had the unlimited power of life and death over all other human races. Designing politicians succeeded in creating in a

part of the Union false apprehensions of insecurity to life and property. Factionous dissatisfaction with existing institutions was produced, and so forgetful were the agitators of what was due to the spirit of the age in which we live, that the State of Georgia, in the early part of 1861, adopted in its fundamental law a provision which did not guarantee absolute liberty of religion, but provided for a dominant creed, with a promise of tolerance to the dissenters.

Were the people in need of any *such* progress ?

My hearers :—In due course of events, and at the time appointed by the organic law of the Union, all the States proceeded to cast their electoral votes with the result which made ABRAHAM LINCOLN from a person of local repute to be the President of the United States. He was at once brought before the world upon an eminence which, in the present century, has only been accorded to the two Emperors of highly civilized France—Napoleon I and the present Emperor.

During the brief period between his election and assuming official functions, the malcontents began war upon the friendly and unsuspecting North. Northern debts were not protected, Northern property was made insecure, Northern men were not permitted to remain within Southern limits, and a price was set upon the head of every American citizen to be captured on the high seas. The possessions of the United States were forcibly wrested from them, and all the hallowed memories which had justly been national glories were turned into ridicule and disgrace. Thus we arrived to the 4th of March, 1861. Mr. LINCOLN entered upon the duties of the highest and most responsible office in the gift of the American people. He came before the world and said to those who aimed at his life and at the existence



of the Republic, that his administration would not be that of strong bias or aggressive partisanship, but to preserve law and order ; that he would conduct the Government at home, as well as abroad, for the benefit of all, and to the exclusion of none, and he exhorted all good and law-abiding citizens to stand by the Constitution, to preserve the public peace, the public treasures and public integrity, and by their efforts to help him to maintain intact the proud edifice of American liberty.

Whilst the conspirators against the Government affected incredulity and sneered at his well-meant words, a rallying effect was produced upon all who valued the Union. Look back upon the last four years, and in no instance did the people refuse to aid Mr. LINCOLN in his efforts. Was it additional power that he required, it was given, because there was the well-justified confidence that he would not abuse it. Was money wanted, it came forth freely, because he would not apply our treasure improperly. Were forces to be raised, they were had, because we knew him to be incapable of using the heroic army and gallant navy otherwise than as against the common enemy. Not one of his appeals failed to be agreed to.

Mr. LINCOLN had also promised that he would not intermeddle in the domestic concerns of the States which remained true, or came back to the Union. This also has he kept. As against the so-called States out of the Union, those persons who were pursuing him and us at the peril of our lives, they retained no constitutional rights which he was in any way bound to respect. His Emancipation Proclamations were directed, not against States in the Union, but against public enemies. It is not my purpose to say much on this sub-



ject. Discussion upon it is past. We do not now discuss the partisan topics of the past century. But we do know that the French Revolution, and the wars consequent thereon on the continent of Europe, did there abolish human servitude—servitude to the soil—distinctions of caste. Wherever the French armies went, their device of Liberty, Fraternity, Equality, quickened into fact. And so with slavery. Wherever the American army has been, slavery is extinct and human liberty progresses. Such progress once made, the civilization of this generation forbids our steps to be retraced.

It was also Mr. LINCOLN'S aim to reorganize civil government in the States which, by their rebellion, had become disintegrated in their political functions. He desired civil instead of military government. He wished that as soon as possible the people should resume their self-government. His humanitarian views respecting Louisiana have been but so very recently expressed that they need not repetition. He was also desirous that the channels of trade and commerce within and without should be freely opened, and that the burthens of taxation should be lightened. He endeavored to obtain for the freedmen an asylum where prejudice of color should not impede their advancement in culture and civilization. Assisted by the sage counsel of my friend, the venerable William Henry Seward, whom God vouchsafed an almost miraculous escape from premeditated murder, he had so shaped our relations with foreign nations that their inward covetousness durst not break out upon us in the additional calamity of a foreign war.

Mr. LINCOLN had thus, in the course of his administration, so gained the esteem of the people, that in 1864 he was re-elected to his office by an almost unanimous vote of the loyal States. Thenceforward, and reassured

against the false clamor of those who misunderstood the popular will, he pursued the even tenor of his way to overcome the rebellion by all the legitimate means in his power. He was so far successful that the strongholds and the powerful armies of our enemies surrendered to him upon a simple promise, that all who composed the hostile organization in arms, laying them down and returning to their homes and reassuming their peaceful avocations, should again be protected by the blessed ægis of American law.

Such a course was the one to be expected from his kind and generous nature. Stern and unyielding to the defiant public enemy, he was humane and gracious to him who repented of his political sin and gave assurance of amendment in the future; for ABRAHAM LINCOLN from his cradle was an humanitarian in politics. He desired and aimed at producing a state of perfect personal liberty. To him all men were created in the image of God. He felt that though Isaac had given his choicest blessings to Jacob, that he had a comforting benediction still for Esau.

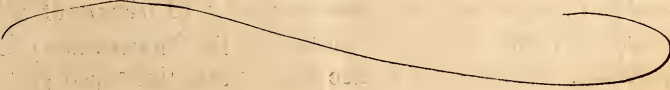
The public mind was thus preparing to receive from him the assurance of peace. No doubt could be made of it. He had refrained from entering Richmond as a proud conqueror, with Lee the captive in his train as a trophy. He had come and gone from the halls of his adversary as a simple citizen, giving daily to the people under the signature simply of "A LINCOLN," his telegrams announcing successes as the precursors of peace for to him as well to us, "Blessed are the peacemakers." Far from us was the thought of his suddenly ceasing to live. The man who should have predicted an assassination would have been deemed a fit inmate of a lunatic asylum. The Jew, schooled to the example of Mordecai, who, sitting in the king's gate, informed his national enemy, Ahasuerus, of the trailing conspiracy

against his life, would have pronounced the catastrophe to be impossible.

But, alas ! for the vanity of human expectations. Instead of the joyful tidings of peace, of the cessation of bloodshed and sacrifice of human victims, the messengers of lightning apprise us of a fearful crime which has deprived us of our appointed leader. Instead of anticipated rejoicings there comes upon us an unutterable woe. The world has not been shocked by so sacrilegious an outrage since the assassination of William of Orange the Silent, he, likewise, a laborer for his country's constitution and for civil and religious liberty.

Mr. LINCOLN, who, as has been aptly remarked to me by the worthy President of this congregation, had shown a fortitude and perseverance which had failed the monarchs of Europe during the continental revulsions of this century, he who had stood firmly the banner-bearer of the Constitution and of the laws, he who had refused to listen to intimidation, and with generous confidence had entrusted his well-being to his fellow-citizens, he was attacked from behind, shot at as you would shoot at a wild beast, killed, murdered in malice and in premeditation by an American !

Heard you the wail which rose from every lip, the moaning of every heart ? Saw you the tear in every eye, the distress of every countenance ? Beheld you how every one of the millions inhabiting this land mourn him as a beloved friend ? This is the proud, the imperishable monument which ABRAHAM LINCOLN, by his purity and integrity, has erected for himself in the hearts and minds, not only of his countrymen, but also wherever Liberty has a worshiper.





The miserable wretch who, by his unnatural crime, has sullied, and tarnished, and blotted the national honor, is beneath mortal punishment. He is now prowling about, hiding himself from man, the ghost of his illustrious victim pursuing him unrelentingly, the mark of Cain upon his brow, the fate of Cain his destiny, his name forever associated with what is most foul and hideous in the fearful catalogue of human miscreants. It is reported that upon believing his fell design to have been accomplished, the murderer exclaimed, "Sic semper tyrannis." This famous and now desecrated phrase was to Rome the precursor of the Augustine era—the happiest, the most prosperous period of imperial history. May the great loss which we have sustained be also compensated for by greater happiness and greater prosperity to come to the United States.

We can but bow in submission to the Divine will. We can carry the memory of ABRAHAM LINCOLN with us as that of a triumphant martyr to humanity, and we can also carry into practice the lessons taught us by the short but eventful life of the great departed :

To be true and honest to ourselves and to our neighbors ;

To stand bravely and fearlessly to the performance of our duties as citizens of this great Republic ;

To be prepared for advancing civilization ; not to be afraid of coming events, but manfully to meet every crisis to which we may be subjected ; to do so cheerfully and with the sole view to restore peace and harmony where our relations have become disturbed. Then will peace dwell in our houses and contentment reign in our habitations. Then our brethren and our neighbors will say unto us, Peace be with you. Then will we have sought to do what is good before the Lord our God. God gives strength unto his people. God blesses his people with peace.